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SUBJECT: Press Interview with Saudi Crown Prince Feisal. *air-1 Com-10*

Jidda-1 London-1 Paris-1

The Embassy encloses a Middle East News Agency translation of a statement given to "al-Ahram" on October 19 by Emir FEISAL, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, who is in Cairo en route to West Germany for medical treatment. The Crown Prince's remarks touched on Saudi Arabian finances; the Suez Canal transit issue; Arab unity, (or lack of it); the Algerian problem; Anglo-Saudi relationships.

For the Ambassador:

Claude G. Ross
Counselor of Embassy for Political Affairs

Enclosure:

As stated.

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ENCLOSURE 1

In an exclusive interview with "Al-Ahram", Feisal spoke about economic conditions in his country. He said: "We are still facing financial crisis. It is a fact, and there is no shame in declaring it. We are indebted to the U.S.A., the Saudi Currency Organization and have other obligations. I believe the crisis will not be over until we get rid of these debts."

Suez Canal

Asked about the problem of navigation in the Suez Canal, the Saudi Crown Prince said: "It is a well-known and clear case. Israel is an aggressive country and is committing perpetual aggressions against our territory. We are still at war with Israel. It is one and the same case, that of the Palestine people and the usurpation of their homeland the resolutions which the U.N. failed to implement."

Asked to comment on the views expressed by the U.S.A., Britain and France at the United Nations in connection with the freedom of navigation through the Canal, he said: "What do we care about their views? Do we Arabs submit in our policy to what they say? It has always been my opinion that the solution of our problems rests in the hands of the Arabs themselves, to solve them here in our Arab states. President Gamal Abdel NASSER had once declared that the United Nations should begin with the implementation of its resolutions, restoring to the Palestine people their rights. This is our view as well."

Differences Among Arabs

Replying to a question whether such an objective could be achieved through the Arab League or by convening an Arab Summit Conference, Feisal said: "We would not like to act like an ostrich. The present state of the Arabs is regrettable. How can we attain our objectives in such an atmosphere of differences? I regret to say that certain quarters are jeopardizing the security of the Arabs. We have thus reached the present state which does not please a sincere Arab citizen."

Problem of Algeria

Speaking about the Algerian problem, Emir Feisal said: "No loyal French citizen would object to the solution of this problem in a manner that would fulfil the aspirations of the Algerian people. It is in the interests of France itself. I do not see why French rulers are anxious to deceive the Arabs. DE GAULLE made known his scheme, recognizing the right of the Algerians to self-determination. In fact, this is an event in French policy. But he attached unjust conditions to this right. Again, a few days ago, the French Foreign Minister declared the readiness of his

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government to negotiate with the leaders of the Algerian Liberation Army, but for one thing only, namely cease-fire.

"There are certain persons in France who wish to keep the Algerian problem unsolved. They consider its solution a threat to their personal interests and a sacrifice of great profits. These people are doing great harm to France. It is the duty of honest French citizens to be aware of these traitors and those who incite them. Otherwise, danger will threaten France and Algeria."

Anglo-Saudi Relations

Asked about latest developments with regard to the restoration of relations between Britain and Saudi Arabia, Emir Feisal said: "There are no contacts with Britain in this connection. But I should like to make this more clear. The British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn LLOYD announced at the House of Commons that his Government was anxious to restore relations with us, but the Saudi Government was laying down unreasonable conditions.

"The fact, however, is altogether different. Following Lloyd's statement, I declared that the Saudi Government was prepared to discuss relations with Britain on the basis of a settlement of the Buraimi Oasis problem. But Britain has maintained silence until now.

"We had also intended to submit the (Buraimi) case to the U.N. General Assembly at its current session, but we thought we would rather concentrate our efforts on other Arab issues. We therefore, decided to place our case before the coming session of the United Nations."

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